

UNTOLD

STORY LEADS FROM MONTANA



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Lions and tigers and bears, oh my!

Well, let's change that to wolves and bobcats and cutthroat trout, plus a whole lot of other unique animals that grace the new Great Northern Carousel in Helena.

"The carousel is specific to Helena in that many of the animals represent Montana's wildlife and the rounding boards on top of the carousel illustrate Helena sites," says Kathy Brown, Project Coordinator for the Great Northern Center. Each of the 14 rounding boards is made of a new kind of glass art developed by Helena resident Mary Harris. Harris calls it "kiln-fired mosaic tile."

The carousel, which began to whirl in early May, is the brainchild of Alan

"The mention of the carousel lights up the eyes of young and old alike."



A happy visitor to the Great Northern Carousel in Helena.

Nicholson, the developer of the Great Northern Town Center. "It's probably the most ornate, newly built carousel out there. Alan Nicholson didn't spare any expense," said Chuck Kaparich (one of the carousel's craftsmen) in a *Helena Independent Record* article. It took Nicholson four years to complete his dream.

"This carousel is a labor of love that has been a family affair involving the whole Nicholson family," explains Kathy. Nicholson's son was a project contractor and his young daughter autographed the

carousel's Indian pony with her handprint.

Carousel-goers can also delight in homemade ice cream at the adjacent Painted Pony Ice Cream Parlor or shop at the gift store filled with carousel mementos.

According to Kathy, "It is such a delight to see families enjoying this center. The mention of the carousel lights up the eyes of young and old alike." Ready to take a spin? The carousel is open 365 days a year. For more details call Kathy Brown at 406-443-2160 or log onto www.gntowncenter.com.

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One Shining Moment

Montana's nickname, "The Treasure State," came from the days of old when gold and silver reigned and millionaires were created. The name still holds true through Montana's wealth of precious and semi-precious gems and stones, such as sapphires, garnets, amethysts and agates.

Indeed, today's rock hounds still find secret treasures in one of Montana's official state gemstones—the moss agate. When properly cut these beautifully translucent quartz stones reveal entire landscapes that are remarkably realistic—striking images of animals, birds, trees, flowers and other natural forms.

The portion of the Yellowstone River running between Billings and Sidney is considered prime agate territory. One man who

knows about these curious stones is Tom Harmon. Raised along the banks of the Yellowstone in northeastern Montana, Tom has spent his life pursuing the secrets of Montana's agate. Today Tom and his son own Harmon's Agate and Silver Incorporated in the tiny town of Savage. The duo sell fine agates as well as design one-of-a-kind pieces of jewelry. Tom has also authored *A River Runs North—the Story of Montana Moss Agate*.

According to Tom even a novice can spot these precious nuggets. "It only takes a few days to train your eyes for the dark-skinned agates. The translucent ones are easy to see." Harmon adds that the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks has river access points where you can launch a boat to search for agate deposits.



Turning gems into jewelry.

If you're not interested in finding your own stones you can always visit the Montana Agate Museum attached to Tom's shop. The museum is home to one of the finest collections of scenic Montana agate. To put a little sparkle in your life, contact Tom Harmon at 406-776-2373, harmonsh@harmonsh.net or log onto www.harmonsh.net.

The Magic City's Magical Tradition

Deck the halls takes on a whole new meaning each year at the annual Moss Mansion Christmas event scheduled for November 18 through the first week of January 2003.

Touted as the kick-off for the holiday season in Billings, the affair unites historic elegance and magical holiday beauty. Local businesses and civic groups ornately adorn each of the mansion's 23 rooms with a splendid tree and holiday trimmings. It takes a full week to decorate the home. This year's theme is centered around "'Twas the Night Before Christmas."

According to Ruth Towe, director of Moss Mansion, the guided holiday tours "get people in the mood for Christmas. They walk away and say, now I feel like decorating my own home."

The 1903 red sandstone mansion, listed on the Register of Historic Places, was the home of the prominent Billings entrepreneur Preston Boyd Moss. Family members occupied the home for over 80 years until the Billings Preservation Society acquired it in 1987.

From Thanksgiving through Christmas Eve, the mansion offers evening carriage rides through Billings' Historic District followed by a grand tour. On these evenings guests get a special treat: seeing the mansion all decked out and brightly lit. Reservations for the carriage rides are recommended.

Another tradition at the mansion is the Family Christmas Festival, which focuses on children's activities. "During the festival there will be walk-through tours where guests can amble through at their leisure



Billings' Moss Mansion.

instead of attending the regularly scheduled tour," says Ruth. "There will be Christmas crafts for the children, demonstrations such as lace making, snacks and music. This occasion, set for December 14 and 15, is meant for children, so they can come for free."

It's never too soon to get into the holiday spirit. For more details about any of the Christmas events or regularly scheduled tours call 406-256-5100 or visit www.mossmansion.com.

One "Bale" of a Story

What started as a friendly competition between ranchers in northcentral Montana has turned into a "goof-hay" contest featuring over 50 sculptures in the annual "What the Hay" contest set this year for September 8, 2002.

It all began in 1989 when Don Derks wanted to display his "cre-hay-tive" side. He decorated hay bales as a bull rider and put the sculpture out for show in his field along Highway 200. Not to be outdone, neighbor Rod Mikkelsen dressed up a bale as a swimmer diving. The following year, locals Sarah Stevenson and Dean Newton created the "What the Hay" contest, which is now sponsored by the Utica, Montana Rod and Gun Club.

Participation from area families continues to grow, with 53 roadside entries in the 2001 contest. The sculptures are a mix of hay, twine, spray paint, netting and "hay-ven" only knows. The event, held the first Sunday after Labor Day, draws bumper-to-bumper traffic along Highways 541 and 249, between the small communities of Windham and Hobson. The midway point along the 21-mile route is Utica, which holds its annual Utica Day Fair in con-



"What the Hay" in Utica.

junction with the hay bale contest. The fair is a mix of arts and crafts booths, great food and flea market treasures. "Spaget-hay" and meat bales most likely won't be served, but home-made pies always prove to be the hit of the day.

Imagination rules the "hay." Everyone is familiar with HAY-ry Potter or Regis BALE-bin and his "Who Wants to be a Baleionaire" hit series. Area residents judge the entries, except for the People's Choice, which is voted on by visitors. The event concludes at the Oxen Yoke Inn, where cash prizes are given out.

Ready to take a hayride? For more information on the annual "What the Hay" contest, contact Marilyn Derks at 406-423-5476.

Meet Me in Montana

Montana can mean the difference between a bored meeting and a board meeting. Whether it's whitewater rafting, hiking, horseback riding or another adventure, the Big Sky means big fun for any group planning a meeting.

Each of Montana's cities has its own unique character; like snowflakes, no two are alike. So wherever a group decides to meet, they're sure to find the welcome that suits their style. Montana's lodging choices range from cozy to elegant, from business-oriented service to dude ranch settings. Conference facilities are readily available for groups of five up to 11,000, with up-to-date technology and amenities to coordinate a successful meeting.

"There is nothing plastic about Montana," says Cyndy Andrus, Executive Director of the Bozeman Convention and Visitor Bureau. "When a group comes here for a meeting they have the opportunity to experience a genuine Western culture that is not a show. You get to mix with the locals at a rodeo or take a hike on one of our gorgeous mountain trails".

And many of the meeting destinations are



served by major airline carriers, with car rental and ground transportation readily available. According to Rhonda Harms, Director of the Billings Chamber of Commerce, "Several of the larger conventions we have hosted have been awestruck with how well organized our city is and how our community opens its arms to them." Harms explains that Billings may be off the beaten path, but the city has all of the restaurants, museums and shopping that are found in big cities, without the big city hassles.

To find out more about Montana as a meeting destination contact Travel Montana's Marlee Iverson at 800-548-3390 ext. 2, e-mail marlee@visitmt.com or visit the meetings website, www.montanameetings.com.

Recovering History

Travelers' Rest, Montana's newest state park, is situated in western Montana on the Idaho/Montana border. It was a Native American crossroads for centuries and a site where the Lewis and Clark Expedition camped twice.

"The stories from the Native American elders and the Lewis and Clark journals are at the core of our understanding of this important place and this complex time in history," says Lee Bastian, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Region 2 park manager.

Salish elders have recounted that 400 people in 30 lodges were encamped in the upper Bitterroot Valley on September 4, 1805, when scouts encountered a group of strange looking men. The curious looking strangers were members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Unaware of the expedition's objectives, and believing the men had met misfortune, the Salish gifted the strangers with a dozen of their "elegant horses" as Clark described them, dried food stores, robes and pack saddles. From here the party pushed north through the Bitterroot Valley until they reached Lolo Creek and Travelers' Rest, where they camped and then moved on toward Idaho over the Bitterroot Mountains.

"Two hundred years ago Lewis and Clark were greeted by the Salish in the Bitterroot, gifted, offered assistance and the opportunity for respectful coexistence. Today, as we work together to tell the story of Travelers' Rest, we renew that offer of respectful coexistence, and this is a tremendous opportunity that I am very hopeful about," explains Germaine White, a Salish educator and tribal member who serves on the board of the Travelers' Rest Preservation and Heritage Association.

A National Park Service grant and Fish, Wildlife & Parks funding have enabled Salish and Lewis and Clark interpreters to work this summer to further develop the stories surrounding the site.

Travelers' Rest State Park will be open from Memorial Day through Labor Day, seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. For information and to schedule an appointment outside of regular park hours call 406-273-4253.

SEPTEMBER

- 1 "Running of the Sheep" Sheep Drive—Reed Point 326-2288
- 1-2 Helmville Labor Day Rodeo—Helmville 288-3273
- 1-2 Team Roping & Dance—Custer 856-4167 or 856-4156
- 2 Labor Day Arts Fair—Red Lodge 446-1370
- 3-13 Undercover Gals Quilt Show—Hardin 665-1184
- 6 River's Edge Trail-Blues & Brews—Great Falls 453-0601 or 761-4966
- 6-8 Can-Am Antique Show With Toys & Dolls—Great Falls 761-4622 or 452-6079
- 6-8 Symposium & Trade Show—Helena 442-4008
- 7 Hardrock Art & Music Festival—Butte 723-7600
- 7 Montana State Chokecherry Festival—Lewistown 538-5436
- 7 Wild West Day—Bigfork 837-5888
- 7-8 Medicine Rocks Black Powder Shoot—Ekalaka 775-6294 or 775-6886
- 7-8 NW Montana Antique Power Ass'n Threshing Bee - 9th Annual—Columbia Falls 837-4795
- 8 Germanfest—Missoula 721-9620
- 8 Hot Laps Mountain Bike Jam—Missoula 549-9777 or 543-3331
- 8 Utica Day Fair—Utica 423-5364
- 11-16 Ride the Russell Trail—Utica 423-5454
- 13-14 Highland Games Festival—Glasgow 228-2222
- 13-15 Libby Nordicfest—Libby 293-6430 or 293-2440
- 14 Canyon Creek Battlefield Pipe Ceremony—Laurel 628-8105
- 14 Montana Old Time Fiddlers' Convention—Lewistown 323-1198
- 14-15 Big Sky Draft Horse Expo—Deer Lodge 492-6753 or 846-3686
- 14-15 Cottonwood Folk Festival—Great Falls 452-3462
- 14-15 Old Settlers Days—Clyde Park 686-4796
- 15 Historic Bell Street Bridge Day—Glendive 365-5601
- 15 Mining Heritage Days—Butte 723-7211
- 16-17 Theater in the Park—Glendive 365-6256
- 16-20 Native American Awareness Week—Pablo 675-0160
- 19-22 Montana Five Rivers Festival of Film—Missoula 777-1777 or 777-0090
- 19-23 Testicle Festival—Clinton 825-4868
- 20-22 Belgrade Fall Festival—Belgrade 388-1616
- 20-22 Havre Festival Days—Havre 265-4383
- 21 Quilt Show—Broadus 436-2416
- 21 Rapelje Mountain Bike and Fine Arts Festival—Rapelje 663-2230 or 663-2194
- 21 York Fest—Helena 475-3259
- 21-22 Threshing Bee—Choteau 466-2470
- 27-29 Bridger Raptor Festival—Bozeman 585-1211
- 27-29 Flathead Quilters Guild Annual Quilt Show—Kalispell 257-6966

- 27-29 Last Chance Community Pow Wow—Helena 439-5631
- 28-29 Northeast Montana Threshing Bee and Antique Show—Culbertson 787-5265
- 29 Art on Broadway—Philipsburg 859-3388
- 29 Lewis and Clark Marathon - A Journey of Discovery—Bozeman 582-1285

OCTOBER

- 4 Artwalk Downtown—October Event—Billings 256-6811
- 5 23rd Annual McIntosh Apple Day—Hamilton 363-3338
- 5 Blue Mountain All Women's Run—Missoula 543-6920
- 5 Oktoberfest—Anaconda 563-2422
- 5 Old Faithful Fall Cycle Tour—West Yellowstone 646-7701
- 5 Stillwater River Run & Fun Walk—Absarokee 328-4775 or 328-4314
- 5-6 Glacier Golden Autumn Arts and Crafts Show and Sale—Essex 888-5700
- 10-13 9th Annual Glacier Jazz Stampede—Kalispell 862-3814
- 12 Fiesta Days—Whitefish 862-3501
- 12 Oktoberfest—Butte 782-2069
- 12 Tamarack Time!—Bigfork 837-4400 or 837-5888
- 12-14 Alta/Mont Railfan Weekend—Essex 888-5700
- 16-19 NILE Stock Show and Pro Rodeo—Billings 256-2495
- 19 20th Annual Autumn Art & Craft Show—Helena 449-4790
- 19-20 Glendive Oktoberfest—Glendive 365-4335
- 25 Hunters Feed and Wild Game Cook-Off—Ennis 682-5357
- 26 Ghost Walks—Bannack 834-3413
- 26-27 Christmas at the Mansion—Kalispell 755-2166

NOVEMBER

- 1-30 Yellowstone Rendezvous Nordic Ski Camp—West Yellowstone 646-7701
- 2 Wine and Food Festival—Sidney 488-2357 or 488-2273
- 2 Winter Fair—Choteau 466-5900
- 8-10 Huff's Antique Show and Sale—Billings 628-4493
- 9 Country Christmas—Lewistown 428-2316
- 9-10 Havre Art Association Annual Show & Sale—Havre 265-2729
- 10 Helmville Craft Bazaar—Helmville 793-5530 or 362-4201
- 14-17 Christmas Collection—Great Falls 727-8255 or 268-0933
- 15-16 Downtown Helena Fall Art Walk—Helena 447-1535
- 16 Bigfork Elves Decorate for Christmas—Bigfork 837-5888
- 16 Specialty Fair—Malta 654-1436
- 18-1/3 Christmas at the Moss Mansion—Billings 256-5100

- 22-23 Annual Holiday Market Place—Missoula 543-8798
- 22-24 Holiday Antiques Sale—Great Falls 562-3289
- 23 Big Timber Christmas Bazaar and Craft Show—Big Timber 932-6720
- 23 Cut Bank Winter Festival—Cut Bank 873-5544 or 873-2337
- 23-24 Holiday Food Festival & Seasonal Creations Craft Show—Billings 657-1267 or 657-1440
- 26-12/21 Holiday Market Room—Lewistown 538-8278
- 28 Holiday Parade—Billings 259-5454
- 29 Christmas City of the North Parade—Kalispell 758-2800
- 29 Christmas Stroll—Anaconda 563-3731
- 29 Christmas Stroll and Parade of Lights—Sidney 433-1916
- 29 Christmas Walk and Parade of Lights—Forsyth 347-5656
- 29 Parade of Lights—Chinook 357-2224
- 29-30 A Christmas in Hamilton Celebration—Hamilton 363-2400 or 363-3030
- 29-30 Holiday Festival of the Arts—Bozeman 586-3333 or 587-8298
- 29-12/1 Artists and Craftsmen of the Flathead Christmas Show—Kalispell 881-4288 or 257-8475
- 29-12/1 Renaissance Fair—Missoula 538-2212
- 29-12/22 4th Annual Christmas Socials and Market—Virginia City 843-5220
- 30 Crazy Mountain Christmas—Big Timber 932-5131
- 30 Madison Valley Women's Club Holiday Craft Bazaar—Ennis 682-5714
- 30 Silver Bells—Fairview 742-5259

For a complete list of events, see us at visitmt.com

FROM MONTANA

The diversity of events, places and people in Montana is almost as wide as the state itself. We hope to give you a taste of that diversity with this quarterly newsletter. In addition, my office offers these services to editors, writers and producers.

Visual Materials

Color slides, 8"x10" B/W photos and stock video footage are available for editorial use.

Writer/Photographer Referrals

We can put you in contact with many of Montana's most talented and experienced freelance writers and photographers.

Editorial Copy/Calendar of Events

We can provide background information or editorial copy for many subjects. We also maintain a calendar of events for the entire state.

Individual Attention

If you need the latest vacation guide and road map of Montana, a liaison with other government agencies or detailed information to fit a specific story angle, we're here to assist you.

Mary Boyle, Publicity Coordinator